STATEMENT OF SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUYE FY2013 MEDICAL HEARING MARCH 28, 2012

I would like to welcome all of the witnesses today as we review the Department of Defense medical programs. There will be two panels today. First, we will hear from the Service Surgeons General, and then we will hear from our Chiefs of the Nurse Corps.

Although she has appeared before the subcommittee in her previous assignment as Chief of the Army Nurse Corps, I would like to welcome back General Patricia Horoho for her first testimony before the subcommittee as the Surgeon General of the Army and commend her for becoming the first female as well as first Nurse Corps Officer to serve as Surgeon General.

I would also like to welcome Vice Admiral Matthew Nathan and General Charles Green. General Green, I understand you are retiring later this year. I thank you for your many years of service to the Air force. I look forward to working with all of you to ensure the future of our military medical programs and personnel.

Every year, the Subcommittee holds this hearing to discuss the critically important issues related to the care and wellbeing of our servicemembers and their families, as Health care is one of the most basic benefits we can provide to the men and women serving our nation.

The advancements military medicine has made over the last several decades have not only dramatically improved medical care on the battlefield but also enhanced health care delivery and scientific advancements throughout the medical field. The results benefit millions of Americans who likely are unaware that these improvements were developed by the military.

There is still much more to be done. Despite the great progress the military medical community has achieved, more and more of our troops are suffering from medical conditions that are much harder to identify and treat, such as traumatic brain injury, post traumatic stress, and depression. We must continue our efforts to heal these unseen wounds of a military that has been at war for over ten years. In addition, the Department of Defense has recommended changes to Military Health System governance and proposed Tricare fee increases. These are some of the issues I hope to address today.

I look forward to your testimony and note that your full statements will be included in the record. I now turn to the Vice Chairman of the Committee, Senator Cochran, for his opening statement.